

Daniel Richardson, One of The County's Early Leaders

Richardson's Name — The story about Richard Caldwell, the first permanent settler in Franklin county, contained Ralph Gregory, Franklin county historian, this man would be a good time to write a series of articles on the county's history going as much back to the American Revolution as possible. His opening article deals with Daniel Richardson, one of the county's early leaders, who came about 11 years after Richard Caldwell. Mr. Gregory's article follows.

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Franklin county was one of the counties of Missouri territory. Though not one of the first counties, it is older than the State of Missouri. It was in existence more than a year and half before the state was founded, and nearly three years before the state was admitted into the Union.

Franklin county was a county during the struggle for statehood and the ongoing Bicentennial celebration of the American Revolution seems a good time to honor the early leaders by remembering who they were and what they and their people did. An understanding of the people and events then should help toward an understanding of the state's coming into being. Modern life in Franklin county was a part of that struggle.

After the Indians, the first people in the county were Frenchmen and westward moving Americans. A few were in the region before the United States owned it and held "Spanish Grants." After 1803 many Americans moved in from Kentucky and Tennessee and settled along the Missouri river. These settlers lived on the land, but did not own it, and were soon alarmed at the insecurity of their rights to the land.

The Territorial Papers of the United States show they complained to the Land Commissioners of weakness and urged the government to confirm their claims, to survey the land and to put it on sale. But confirmations came slow and the survey of the land that became Franklin county was not completed until 1817, and the land was not put on sale until July 1818. Then in that month and the next most of the county's early settlers, who did not have a confirmed claim, bought the land they lived on. They and earlier ones had been settled for many years and were ready for a locally governed social life. They immediately moved for a county and in December they had it.

Daniel Richardson

In December 1818, Daniel Richardson was the region's man in the Fourth General Assembly of Missouri Territory. When elected he represented the demands of the people for a county and had the burden of pressing for the act. The task of urging and working for the formation of a county in western St. Louis county centered on him. He was a socially able man, who led families to Missouri and was much depended on to administer estates. He was not a lawyer, but his formal education must have been above the common. He is titled "Maj." on one document in Franklin county, and may have been a leader in war as well as peace. His birth date is not known, but he is assumed to have been born about 1776.

Perfery Indian

The Richardsons were early settlers from Kentucky into Louisiana Territory and pioneer settlers from Missouri into Oregon Territory. Some of Daniel Richardson's boys joined trading and trapping enterprises and went way up the Missouri river soon after Lewis and Clark. Two of them worked as guides for trade expeditions. One, Amos Richardson, was shot by an Indian arrow and carried the arrowhead in his body. John Bradbury quoted him as saying he sometimes preferred living among the Indians. The Richardson of territorial Franklin county certainly were of the breed called "pioneer settlers" and "frontiermen."

Daniel Richardson moved from Fairfax county, Virginia to Madison county, Kentucky, in 1796. In 1803 he moved to upper Louisiana Territory and lived awhile in the "Bonhomme" area west of St. Louis. Settlers then were in danger of attack by Indians and dared not settle too far apart or too far up the river. He next moved to the Labadie area. Here he and Ephraim Richardson found the danger of Indian attack greater. John Nidenhour, a neighbor, was killed by Indians.

In 1805 Daniel Richardson went back to Kentucky. In 1806 he returned to the Labadie area bringing, it is believed, the Nathan Richardson family with him. In that year he is of record as signing a petition for a road from St. Louis to the "plantation of Alexander McCourtney," which was in the Boles area. Soon again he moved farther up the Missouri river and chose land south of Richard Caldwell along the St. Johns creek. Here he built a hewn log house and "settled for good." One of his older sons and a younger

law settled about him. His daughter, Elizabeth, who married John Maupin, also settled nearby.

When the land went on sale in 1813, Daniel bought over 200 acres in sections 18 and 19 of Township 46 N West. This purchase locates his home farm, the main part of which was where the Otto Sullrop farm along RR is today.

14 Sons — 4 Daughters

Daniel and Nancy Richardson had 19 children — 14 sons and 5 daughters. Daniel's will of August, 1826, names 18 children. In a time of high infant mortality all the children but one son lived to maturity. Seventeen raised families. Ten remained in Missouri and eight moved on to be first settlers of Oregon Territory. Mrs. Lois L. Baker of Eugene, Oregon, has written a book which includes a genealogy and some history of Richardsons of Oregon.

Daniel's children lived a generation in Franklin county before they began moving out to Oregon Territory in 1840. They did some valuable work for the county and the lives of those who were and some who stayed back some in settling counties.

Amos gave up his claim for the wild west, married Nancy Henson and settled in Franklin county. He had one slave, a girl, and in the only one of Daniel and Nancy's children known to be a slaveholder. In 1829 he moved to Polk county, Mo., and there near the Hickory county line he lived out his life as a farmer.

Daughter Naomi married Philip Miller, the founder of New Haven. Dameron married William Hammett, a leading citizen of New Haven. Elizabeth married John Maupin, who was killed in an explosion of his powder mill in 1814 or 1815. In 1815 she married Benjamin Brown, John's helper who survived the blast. The mill produced much powder for soldiers of the territory during the war of 1812. Sarah married Clayton Burke Hinton, who became a wealthy farmer, a county officer and a county judge before he left for Oregon Territory in 1833. Three sons led the way as settlers on the upper Bourbonne.

The inventory of his estate shows Daniel Richardson to have had a well stocked farm. Listed are 53 hogs, 23 sheep, 27 geese, 13 horses and 34 head of cattle. He did not own slaves. One of the better houses in the county was his. The Territory only taxed the better houses and those with 50 or more acres. Most were almost all hewn log houses, called "mansions" or "country houses." In 1820 the house of Harry Rappaport, where the first circuit court was held, had the highest value, which was \$200. The house of Daniel was valued at \$200.

Handled Calver's Estate

Daniel Richardson was the administrator of John Calver's estate and was still handling it when he was Territorial representative. Calver's estate was finally settled after Daniel's death by Daniel's sons, Amos and Richard.

Franklin county, when formed by the territorial government, with Daniel Richardson as the people's agent, extended to the Osage river and was a vast, wild, well wooded forest area, south of the Missouri river. It had only small patches of prairie. Most settlers were in choice living spots on some fertile bluff, bottom, island or bank of the Missouri river or on land at the mouth, or near the mouth of some small stream entering the big river. There were some settlers on the Meramec and Bourbonne rivers and up the St. Johns. Bowd, Butler and Berger in 1816, but the bulk was along the south side of the Missouri river.

Consequently the commissioners for a county seat chose a place central to the river settlement.

In late 1818, when the county was formed, it had only about 2,000 human beings. The household records of the 1820 U.S. census were lost in Washington D.C., but some totals are known. Some maps and other records make the total population was 2,575. Murre's Gazetteer of 1821 gives some totals which must have come from the 1820 census. It says the county had 299 slaves, 323 persons engaged in agriculture, 7 in commerce and 2 in manufactures. Beck's Gazetteer of 1825 reported the population to be 1,928. Franklin county lost about a thousand persons when Gassett county was formed from it November 25, 1826.

If Daniel Richardson had not had the responsibility of Territorial representative, it is very probable he would have been one of the first county officers. He died in October, 1826, his wife Nancy in 1833. Their graves have been much searched for, but not found. Daniel was a leading settler, a member of the territorial government, the father of many children, yet, like his neighbors, John Calver and Richard Caldwell, his share of life comes down to us without a sure sign of his place in death.